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FM AMEMBASSY TIRANA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6856  
INFO RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUDKSR/EUCOM PLANS AND ANALYSES STUTTGART GE PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/CDR USEUCOM VAHINGEN GE PRIORITY  
RUFNPKB/COMUSNAVEUR NAPLES IT PRIORITY  
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TIRANA 000222

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/21/2028

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [NATO](#) [AL](#)

SUBJECT: DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OKETA TO BE NEXT DEFENSE  
MINISTER

REF: TIRANA 199

Classified By: Ambassador John L. Withers II, Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

(C) Prime Minister Berisha named Deputy Prime Minister  
Gazmend Oketa to replace Fatmir Mediu as Defense Minister.  
President Topi told Ambassador on March 21 that Oketa was a  
good choice; Topi planned to approve the appointment.  
Embassy has worked closely with Oketa, inter alia on the MCC  
Threshold Program. When that program ran into problems,  
Oketa cut through the delay, signed the necessary orders, and  
got the job done. We find him dedicated, determined and  
effective, with no taint of corruption of which we are aware  
-- the "anti-Mediu." (EUR/SCE and USNATO have Embassy's  
informal bio.)  
WITHERS